

## **Abstract of the Disclosure**

The preferred embodiments described herein provide a system and method for collecting traffic data in a computer network. In one preferred embodiment, a computer network is provided with a plurality of network elements each operating with a different protocol. A protocol with which to communicate with one of the network elements is determined, and traffic data is collected from the network element using the determined protocol. Other preferred embodiments are provided, and any or all of the preferred embodiments described herein can be used alone or in combination with one another.